



Plant shelterbelts bordering or between fields



This shelterbelt protects tomatoes from the wind and also serves as excellent wildlife habitat. Choose tree varieties of varying heights to attract many types of wildlife species.

What to do:

Consider the direction and extent of prevailing winds and plant cottonwoods, sycamores, willows, oaks, black walnuts and other tall vegetation to shield your cultivated fields. The most effective shelterbelts include a mixture of several layers of evergreen and deciduous shrubs, such as coyote brush, box elder, toyon, cottonwoods, and oaks. Contact some of the resources listed on the inside back cover to help you select varieties that are suitable for your soil, climate, and site conditions.

To provide sheltering benefits for your crops, the shelterbelt should be 15 to 20 feet wide. The young trees and shrubs will require weed control and irrigation to become established. In years when adjacent crops aren't irrigated, riparian shelterbelt plantings on shallow soils (less than four feet deep) may require periodic irrigation. If you run livestock in adjacent fields, you will need to fence the young trees until they are well-established.

Wildlife will be drawn to the shelterbelt very quickly. One study found 92 different bird species using a shelterbelt during a

single summer. It will take a few years to achieve full benefit from this practice.

Benefits:

- Provides food, cover, resting and breeding habitat, and migration corridors for a wide variety of animals, including deer, pheasants, quail, doves, herons, egrets, song birds—and birds of prey that can help control rodent populations.

- Dampens winds and shelters downwind croplands for distances up to 20 times the height of the trees. A plot of well-established trees can shelter distances of 300 to 600 feet.

- Reduces crop desiccation and retains soil moisture.

- Reduces soil erosion and, if appropriately located, filters runoff to improve water quality.

- Catches dust from adjacent roads.

- Protects grazing animals from chilling winds and hot sun.

- Can harbor beneficial insects that help control pests on adjacent fields.

- Provides privacy and buffers sound from nearby roads.